

place, the longer things take to happen, and it is incumbent upon us to get this joint committee up and running.

I might say to the gentleman that I know he has suggested a commission, but I feel very strongly that it is our responsibility as a Congress in a bipartisan way to look at these issues and have oversight of these issues. And in accepting and understanding that responsibility, and not being relieved by somebody else or some other commission of that responsibility, this was one of the best ways we knew to do this.

We looked back at precedent, even when the gentleman's side of the aisle was in the majority, and found a precedent for doing this in a bipartisan, bicameral way when the Democrats wanted to do it, and we thought it made sense and so that is exactly what we did.

So we feel strongly that we, in a bipartisan way, are responsible for looking at these issues, and I would imagine by next week we will address this by whatever means is necessary to get it up and going. And also next week, I would assume that the Speaker would make those appointments that are necessary to fill that joint committee.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the leader, and reclaiming my time, I think I have suggested this before, but I believe it would be useful, perhaps at some point in time in the near term, that the Speaker convene the leadership of both sides of the aisle to discuss how we are going forward.

I understand there were precedents for the action that was taken, but it was not taken after discussions with this side of the aisle. And as the majority leaders know, both on the Senate side that was the case and on the House side it was the case.

Again, I agree with the gentleman's proposition that the public wants to see us move ahead together and respond to this crisis together because those who have suffered are our focus, not party politics or ideological differences, but helping those who are hurting and making sure that we protect those who may still yet be vulnerable. I think we can best do that by working together.

On another subject and moving on, can the majority leader tell me where we stand on reconciliation? Press reports indicate that there is a delay in the development of those bills, as called for in the budget resolution, at least for some period of time. Can the gentleman bring us up to date on what the present status of reconciliation is?

Mr. DELAY. I appreciate the gentleman continuing to yield.

Entitlement reform is still one of the highest priorities of the House this fall. However, due to the events of the last 10 days, it has been replaced as the number one priority. Therefore, we will likely postpone consideration of these very important reforms for a number of weeks.

We are still trying to decide when we might approach this issue, based upon

all the issues that are flooding in from all Members of things that we need to do in light of the disaster of Katrina. So I just think it is probably a little early for us to give specific dates as to when we would go to markup and those kinds of things until we get a better handle on what we need to be doing to make sure that we are doing everything that we can to take care of those victims of Katrina.

Mr. HOYER. I appreciate the gentleman's comments, Mr. Speaker. I am sure the gentleman is familiar with the letter that the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) and Mr. CONRAD and others have sent with reference to reconciliation. We are concerned, of course, because of Katrina and for the exact reason we have postponed reconciliation, we are very concerned that the needs are so large at this point in time that we need to be very careful about the issue of Medicaid and, frankly, the issue of additional tax cuts.

In light of the fact we have just spent \$62 billion additional, which we did not anticipate and which will exacerbate, therefore, our budget deficit, and which absolutely had to be done, everybody, almost everybody supported that effort, including the majority leader and myself, but we hope that we can perhaps have discussions about that issue as well.

Lastly, Mr. Leader, I talked about the long term and Thanksgiving. October. We have a number of holidays in October. Could the gentleman perhaps amplify on what his expectation is of the first 2 weeks in October?

My understanding is the probability is that we will be in Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of the first week of October, but the second week of October, can the gentleman give us some thoughts on what that might be in light of the Jewish holidays and the Christopher Columbus holiday?

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, I would note that the week of October 10, which is the second week of October, and due to the way that Columbus Day and Yom Kippur fall that week, there is only a very narrow window of time when we could be voting. And with the expectation that we could potentially be in session until the Friday before Thanksgiving, we would suggest that the House follow the Senate and adjourn for the entire week of October 10.

As for the week of October 3, Rosh Hashanah will make it very difficult for many Members to return to the Capitol prior to the evening of Wednesday, October 5, and at this point in time we anticipate having votes that week but not before Wednesday night.

We will watch as things unfold with regard to the needs of floor time and we will make further pronouncements as we get closer to that week.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that comment, Mr. Speaker, and presume, therefore, that we are reasonably safe in advising our Members that the second week of October we will

probably not be in session; is that accurate, Mr. Leader?

Mr. DELAY. The gentleman is correct.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the majority leader for his information.

□ 1645

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2005, AND HOUR OF MEETING ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2005

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at noon on Monday next, and further, that when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 13, 2005, for morning hour debates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

PERMISSION FOR COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY TO HAVE UNTIL MIDNIGHT, SEPTEMBER 9, 2005, TO FILE A REPORT ON H.R. 3132, CHILDREN'S SAFETY ACT OF 2005

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary may have until midnight on Friday, September 9, 2005, to file a report to accompany H.R. 3132.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR H.R. 889, COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 2005

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules may meet next week to grant a rule for the consideration of H.R. 889, the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2005, which may require that amendments be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD prior to their consideration on the floor.

The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure ordered the bill reported on May 18 and filed its report with the House on July 28. Members should draft their amendments to the text of the bill as reported by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel to ensure that their amendments are drafted in the most appropriate format. Members are also advised to check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain that their amendments comply with the rules of the House.

AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR H.R. 3132, CHILDREN'S SAFETY ACT OF 2005

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Rules may meet next week to grant a rule for the consideration of H.R. 3132, the Children's Safety Act of 2005, which may require that amendments be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD prior to their consideration on the floor.

The Committee on the Judiciary ordered the bill reported on July 27, 2005, and is expected to file its report with the House on Friday, September 9, 2005. Members should draft their amendments to the text of the bill as reported on July 27, 2005.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel to ensure that their amendments are drafted in the most appropriate format. Members are also advised to check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain that their amendments comply with the rules of the House.

JUDGE JOHN ROBERTS, A QUALIFIED NOMINEE FOR THE SUPREME COURT

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, since President Bush nominated John Roberts to serve on the Supreme Court in July, we have heard countless stories confirming Mr. ROBERTS' character, leadership abilities, and commitment to justice. Throughout his career, he has achieved an accomplished record of government service and has demonstrated his dedication to protecting our rights. The more Americans learn about him, the more they like him.

On Sunday, President Bush nominated Judge Roberts to follow in the footsteps of Chief Justice William Rehnquist as our Nation's highest ranking judge. When the Senate begins its confirmation process next week, I am confident that they will continue to discover that Judge Roberts is well suited for this position. From serving as a law clerk for Chief Justice Rehnquist to arguing 39 cases before the Supreme Court, he possesses a unique wealth of knowledge and experience.

After losing Chief Justice Rehnquist, our judicial system needs a similar leader who will fairly and effectively guide our courts. I strongly believe our Nation has found such a person in John Roberts.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

PROVIDING FAMILY ASSISTANCE IN THE WAKE OF HURRICANE KATRINA

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as we offer our sympathy and reflection today to the victims of 9/11, we stand here again looking at another horrific and unspeakable tragedy, Hurricane Katrina.

The numbers are clear that the greatest victims will be children. Some 400 children are homeless, and we know that between one-third and a quarter of them will have a traumatic experience after the end of their journey through Hurricane Katrina. We know that 35 percent of them that experienced this terrible tragedy will have a severe mental illness, and we also know that there are 800 missing children that are now lost or presumed dead through Hurricane Katrina.

I think it is important as we look toward more legislation bills and moving quickly to address the horribleness of this tragedy that we provide for a one-time grant assistance for the children who have been impacted by this hurricane and that legislation be drafted and passed by both bodies to secure their protection and that we provide a structure that will monitor these children through adulthood, through reaching the age of majority.

We have heard from psychiatrists that say that the most vulnerable victims of this tragedy who will suffer a horrific experience will be our children. We must rally around them. It is imperative that this Congress work together to provide them with the financial, social, psychiatric, and, of course, family assistance that is necessary.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SODREL). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

A WEEKEND IN SEPTEMBER 1900

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the devastation of Hurricane Katrina is a vivid reminder to Texans of another hurricane that occurred 105 years ago, the weekend of September 8, 1900, in Galveston, Texas. That hurricane, known to many as "the storm," was the deadliest natural disaster to take place in American history.

In 1900, Galveston was the showplace of the Gulf of Mexico, referred to by

many as the Jewel of Texas and the wealthiest city in the State of Texas. On that weekend in September, as 40,000 residents and vacationers were bidding farewell to summer, weather forecasters were watching closely an unnamed hurricane brewing in the Gulf of Mexico. Having very little of today's weather forecasting equipment, the trackers lost the location of the storm in the gulf after it passed the predicted landfall of Florida.

It began as a tropical storm on August 27, 1900, and no one could imagine what it would become. Twelve days later, in the darkness of the night on September 8, 105 years ago today, it started to rain in Galveston and the water silently and quickly began to rise. It crept and covered the low-lying island. The island was barely above sea level at 5 to 9 feet. There was no time for any evacuation.

The strong winds and rains ravaged the city. Houses were devastated and families were swept away. As the power and phones went out, people started wading through the murky mounting water. They sought shelter in downtown buildings and churches as the gale winds and incessant rain continued to increase.

Nuns in the local orphanage tied a roped around the waists of the children and unsuccessfully tried to lead them to higher ground. Of the 93 children and 10 Catholic nuns, only three boys survived.

No one was prepared or adequately warned for this Category 4 hurricane that hit the city of Galveston. The force of the 140-mile-an-hour winds caused a water surge that covered most of the 3 mile by 30 mile island in minutes.

The nameless hurricane destroyed 3,500 buildings, over half of the city. The loss of life was staggering. It reminds me of the scripture of old, that the rains came down, the waters rose, and the winds blew and beat against the houses. But when the rains stopped and the wind blew no more, over 8,000 people had died. Hundreds more were never accounted for. Nearly everyone on the island knew a friend or relative who had perished.

Isaac Cline, a Galveston forecaster, never believed that the hurricane could ravage this paradise island. After the calm came once more, Cline described the storm's aftermath as "the most horrible sight that was ever witnessed by a civilized people."

When the hurricane finally moved inland, and it did not end its winds until it got to Canada, the task of recovery was overwhelming. Prisoners of the State penitentiary were used in the cleanup to find the dead, buried at sea, only to resurface on the beaches. Bodies were still being found in February of the next year. Since it was not possible to bury the thousands that died, they were eventually cremated.

The story of Galveston's hurricane is a story of death and devastation and ultimate determination.